

THE NEW YORK SUN.

MONDAY MORNING, FEB. 5, 1866.

RECONSTRUCTION OF POLITICAL PARTIES.

The reconstruction work of Congress is not likely to be confined exclusively to the Southern States. If we may judge from present indications, the reconstruction of political parties will also be an important result of the course that Congress is now pursuing. The time is evidently very near when the present chaotic condition of parties will assume distinctive shapes, with clearly defined outlines, and based upon distinct principles. Until very recently all parties—or rather all political combinations—professed to support the administration. That was an anomalous condition in American politics, and of course, could not permanently continue. It was plain enough that a rupture must come sooner or later, but it was difficult to tell when and in what way the event would occur. Therefore, it is not surprising that we should be near the point of a reconstruction of parties in this country, but it is interesting to witness the manner in which the present chaos of parties is resolving itself into form. We have said that the time for this transformation is near, and it requires only a glance at the situation to see that the assertion is true. Congress is now considering three distinctive measures, all of which will doubtless be approved by both branches of that body, and against all of which the President has publicly committed himself. The House has passed the representative amendment to the Constitution, and the Senate has passed the Civil Rights bill, and also the bill for enlarging the powers of the Freedmen's Bureau. Of course the President cannot consistently sign any one of these bills, for by doing so he would act in direct opposition to his principles and his official policy. On the other hand, if he vetoes these measures, he necessarily places himself in conflict with the dominant party, for each of the bills in question has been made a political issue. From these circumstances we see that the "support of the President" by political factions will soon be less general than it has been. The garb of fidelity which has been worn by those who at heart oppose him, will necessarily be thrown off, and the political elements of many now will take their place upon one side or the other, and settle down into two great parties, one supporting and the other opposing the President. The signs of the times indicate that the old issues which have hitherto divided the Republican and Democratic parties will not appear in the new political condition. It is the Radical element that is opening the war upon the President, and it is the Conservatives, without distinction of old names, who are rallying to his defense. So far as appears from the proceedings of Congress it would seem that the Radicals are very strong, but that faction are proportionately much stronger in Congress than they are among the people; and in a general division of parties we think the Conservatives would have the advantage in numbers. Whatever form parties may take, however, it is evident that the time for their reconstruction, in some shape, is not far distant.

CHARITIES AND CORRECTION.

The Commissioners of Public Charities and Correction have just made their report for the year 1865. This is one of the most important branches of the city government, as it has the superintendence of all the city prisons, Bellevue Hospital, Penitentiary, Almshouse, Workhouse, Lunatic Asylum, and several other public institutions. The official expenses of the Commissioners for the last year aggregated \$642,243.42, and their disbursements for the present year will probably not be less than a round million. The details of the report have not much matter of especial interest, as they consist chiefly of statistics relating to the inmates of the several institutions under the charge of the Commissioners. One fact, which is worthy of notice, is the crowded condition of the city prisons. The report shows that all the prisons are filled far beyond their legitimate capacity, and the consequence is that criminals are huddled together in a manner that is bad for them both physically and morally. The statistics concerning the small-pox hospital show that disease to be much less fatal than is popularly supposed. The total number of patients during the year was 1,116, while the number of deaths was 140—only about one in eight. In fact the ratio of mortality was greater among the Alms House inmates than among the small-pox patients. As many as 6,181 persons were admitted to the Alms House during the year, of whom 823 died—being a fraction over one in six. The Penitentiary exhibits anything but encouraging, the number of prisoners having increased nearly one-half during the last year. The report for 1864 showed that the number confined during that year was 921—last year it was 1,670—and the Commissioners are expecting a further heavy increase the present year. This is a significant circumstance and one that deserves attention, both from the makers and administrators of our laws. The report upon the institutions of minor importance, is mainly statistical, containing but little that is of general interest. So far as we can discover from the document the Commissioners have done their work satisfactorily.

NOTHING MORE FROM MEXICO.

We have another installment of Mexican news, a part of which, at least, is not entitled to credence. It is again reported that Juanzé had arrived at San Antonio, Texas, having finally abandoned Mexico; but this is only a repetition of the report that was circulated a few weeks ago, and is probably no more reliable than was that. From the lower Rio Grande, however, we have some news that is probably reliable. A United States Military Commission was investigating the late outrage at Bagdad, and there was a prospect that the offenders would receive their deserts. General Wauzer had issued an order directing that all armed persons found lurking upon the Texas side of the Rio Grande shall be arrested. The same officer has also written a letter in reply to a protest signed by the merchants and foreign consuls at Matamoras, relative to the Bagdad affair. According to the report, his letter only gives another evidence of his indiscretion. It is said that in it he charged that the protesting parties were greatly instrumental in aiding the rebels during the war, by furnishing them with arms, war munitions, etc. There is no doubt of the truth of this charge, but Gen. Wauzer should remember that the United States Government is not driven to the extremity of defending the outrage upon Bagdad for the sake of visiting retribution for past injuries. Gen. Wauzer's business is to look after his troops,

and keep upon his own territory, leaving the Government to determine questions of retribution. If he is anxious to leave Texas, he is probably adopting the proper course for getting away.

BEN. JOHN BELL AND HIS CALCULATIONS.

Ben. John Bell, who headed a BELL EXPRESS ticket for the Presidency in 1860, is one of that class of Southern men who at the outbreak of the rebellion had not the courage to stand manfully by the old flag, and who after drifting into the gulf of secession had not the heart to engage in active warfare against that flag. He was hardly heard of during the rebellion, but he has lately turned up again in a long dissertation upon "the future of the negro race." He gives it as his opinion that at the expiration of twenty years from this time the negro population of the South will have diminished to half a million on account of their depravity and indolence. Mr. Bell may be a prophet, but we incline to the belief that his prediction will not be verified unless the Southern ultraists should be more severe toward the negroes than they have lately been. His prophecy is probably founded upon a mathematical calculation of the effect that the present attitude of the ultraists will have upon the freedmen; but while figures are proverbially truthful, we think that his premises are incorrect—that he underrates the darky's powers of endurance. It seems to be the aim of a certain class of Southern extremists to exterminate the negro race as speedily as possible, but to place the results of their efforts at three and a half millions in twenty years, is certainly too high. Mr. Bell must be mistaken.

THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD QUESTION.

CHARLES CHAVAN, of the Croton Department, has submitted to the Legislature his opinion concerning the proposition for a subterranean railroad under Broadway. He strongly opposes the plan, on the ground that the road, by its interference with the water-pipes, would necessarily reduce the supply of Croton, however carefully the work of constructing the tunnel might be performed.

But Engineer CHAVAN's report is by no means conclusive. In the first place, the tunnel railroads in European cities have not interfered with the water supply, and why should there be any difference in the case of New York? Second, other engineers, perhaps quite as competent as Mr. Chavan, have given the opinion that the underground road would not necessarily endanger the water-pipes at all. Third, the bill authorizing the said road makes the company responsible for any damage that may be entailed, and they are ready to undertake the work by guaranteeing the city against danger to either water, sewer or gas pipes. If there were really any danger to the Croton from the proposed tunnel, that would certainly be a grave objection, but under the circumstances it looks very much as if this cry about the water had been sprung by the street railroad interest, with the object of defeating the pending bill. We hope the Legislature will provide for this much needed relief to city travel, and that they will not be induced, by the tricks of the horse-car monopolists, to look upon the project with disfavor.

THE FENIAN SCARE IN CANADA.

The Canadians have got the Fenian nightmare again. The TORONTO LEADER says—"It is positively asserted that all the volunteers are under arms, and that all are required to be in readiness, as a Fenian raid is expected." Another journal reports that a Cabinet council of the Canadian government was to be held with reference to the Fenian excitement, and from other sources there is evidence that the "blue-flags" have again worked themselves into a fright. Of course their fear is all imagination, for the Fenian leaders are just now engaged in very different business from invading the cheerless land of the Provinces. O'MAHONY is busily engaged in issuing bonds and ROBINSON is on a tour through the West, trying to heal up the breach in the organization. Until both of these purposes have been accomplished Canada may as well feel easy, as it is evident, that there is no immediate danger.

STATE WAR INDEBTEDNESS.

The aggregate war debts of the loyal States as already stated in the Sun, are estimated at \$200,000,000. The following are official statements:

Maine.....	\$12,607,000
New Hampshire.....	13,000,000
Massachusetts.....	8,700,000
Rhode Island.....	2,100,000
Connecticut.....	6,500,000
New York.....	17,000,000
N.J.	111,000,000
Pennsylvania.....	26,700,000
Delaware.....	54,000,000
Maryland.....	1,100,000
West Virginia.....	8,600,000
Ohio.....	2,000,000
Indiana.....	65,000,000
Illinois (estimated).....	22,500,000
Wisconsin.....	12,200,000
Minnesota.....	2,500,000

QUEEN VICTORIA'S PRESENT TO HER GRANDSON.

The Queen of England has presented to her baby grandson, Prince Victor, the son of the Prince of Wales, an artistic gift which has been two years in preparation. The work consists of a statuette of the late Prince Consort in silver, and stands three feet two and a half inches in height. He is in a standing position with gilt armor, copied from the figure upon the tomb of the Earl of Warwick in Warwick Cathedral. He is represented as Christian in the "Pilgrim's Progress," and around the plinth on which the figure stands is the verse from Timothy, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course; I have kept the faith." Behind the figure, and resting upon the stump of an oak, is the helmet of Christian. The shield of the Prince rests against the stem, and near the tree are the white lilies of purity, which are usually introduced into the pictures of the Pilgrim. Immediately beneath the plinth and in front of the entablature of the pedestal, is the inscription: "Given to Albert Victor Christian Edward, on the occasion of his baptism, by Victoria R., his grandmother and godmother, in memory of Albert, his beloved grandfather." In the panel below, and over the royal arms, is the verse—

"My Rose of Love with tears I laid in earth,

"My Lily! Purity, have soared to heaven;

"But Faith still lives, and sets in this new birth,

"How both once more to cheer my soul are given."

On the panel on the side, over the Queen and Prince Consort's arms, is the verse—

"Fight the good fight I fought, and still like him

"Cherish the flowers of Purity and Love;

"So shall he, when the earthly joys grow dim,

"First great thines in our Saviour's home above."

On a third panel, and over the arms of the Prince and Princess of Wales, is the verse:

"Walk as he walked, in faith and righteousness;

"Strive as he strove, the weak and poor to aid;

"See not thyself but other men to thine;

"So win, like him, a wreath that will not fade."

Beneath the front panel, over the figures "Isaac,"

are inscribed in large size letters the prince's name, Albert Victor Christian Edward; and in an oblong panel, "born January the 8th, baptiz'd March 10th." Looking to the front of the work,

a figure of Hope stands at the right side, one of Faith on the left; and behind, or in the third niche, is a group of Charity, each of oxidized silver. At the side of each figure and group there are lilies in enamel. Upon the frieze over the figure of Faith are the words "Walk as he walked in Faith"; the last word being inscribed beneath the figure. In the same manner, in connection with the figure of Hope, are the words "Strive as he strove in Hope." And over the group of Charity, also in enamel, are the words "Think as he thought—in God with him." Over Faith is the word of Purity: over Hope is the word Life; having appropriate reserves to the person of the young prince; and over the group of Charity, and resting upon the top of the niche, here is the lily of the valley.

The front panel contains in the centre the royal arms of England, surmounted by the crown. The left side, as you look at the panel, has the arms of the late Prince Consort, and at the other side the arms of the Prince of Wales. The mottoes of each shield are thrown into flowing ribbons. The entire treatment of this group is in a fanciful and allegorical style. Just beneath the royal shield is a white lily bending down, over a broken rose, with upon the background of the rose the word "Purity."

To the right of the Prince of Wales' shield there is a figure of an infant boy looking up at a full-blown rose, which stands erect upon a perfect stem, with, besides, a white lily, and immediately over the boy figures a bunch of snowdrops, emblematic of youth or spring. This entire group is enriched by the rose, thistle and shamrock, tastefully introduced to form a background. The ebony (or black) moulding points to the death of the Prince, and the white stars symbolize the heaven in which the Prince Consort now dwells. The arms of the Queen, are in one shield, dexter, and in a second shield, sinister, are the arms of the late Prince. The panel is lined at the front with a tasteful arrangement of the rose, thistle and shamrock. The remaining panel is lined in the same manner, but with, however, the Prince of Wales' arms and those of Denmark, minister. Additional interest is imparted to the work from the circumstance of the inscription having been written by the Queen herself. The verses were written by Mrs. Prothero, the wife of the Rector of Whippingham, near Osborne, in the Isle of Wight.

A FOX IN A CHIMNEY.

The London Evening LIPS of the 15th instant,

has the following relative to a fox hunt, which terminated by Reynard taking refuge in a chimney:

On Friday last, the Old Berkshire Hounds met at Buckland, and after some exciting sport arrived at Stanmore. Here Reynard rather surprised his pursuers by mounting a house-top, but thinking his retreat unsafe while in sight of his numerous four-legged pursuers, he sought for further safety and soon found an aperture sufficiently large to admit him—it was the chimney. One hurried look at his anxious adversaries and he disappeared. Quietly seated in room below was a female. Little did she dream of what was in store for her. Presently she hears a noise, and the next moment, preceded by a shower of soot, comes down the chimney a fine fox, half-blackened in his descent. The female, frightened at so strange a visitor, rushed to the door, and would have gone further, had not a bound prevented her. The house was soon the temporary habitation of a pack of hounds. Reynard was drawn north and led captive and his career was soon ended. The frightened female was rewarded by the huntsman in a pecuniary manner, and the scene, which caused no little excitement, terminated.

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